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Dr. Fred Ikle
UnderSecretary of Defence (Policy)
The Pentagon
Washington, DC

Dear Fred:

I am sending this to you directly, along with a package of commentary on the 8/26/87 draft, as I hope it will get your personal attention.

Comment on p. 17 "fissures in the Soviet alliance..."

These remarks evoke some of our deepest dilemmas in how we formulate and enunciate our war/peace aims vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. We have not (perhaps should not) face up to them squarely in our statement of strategic objectives. But then they should not slide in by inadvertence.

Presumably we do NOT wish to portray ourselves as implacable enemies of the Russian people, nor that we are laying in wait to exploit any weakness to overthrow the regime. The latter is not one of our stated strategic objectives (although it may be thought to be the only way we can win stable security for ourselves.) In a nuclear age, we had better eschew it; and we ought to minimize their anxieties on that score. They may pay no attention to our report at all; but if they do attend, I don't want them to read arguments for them to reinforce their military buildup -- to the contrary.

My own view is that we had better reconcile ourselves to the present boundaries of Soviet influence, do what we can to contain (sic) its expansion, let internal processes of evolutionary reform do what will; offer incentives for them to relax in their military contra domestic investments. I'm not sure what we should DO in the event of serious fissures; but I suspect there is more harm in exciting the paranoia of the leadership than benefit from encouraging dissidence within the bloc, by discussing the subject now. (The matter is debatable, and I would enjoy hearing more evidence on the point.) And I would hesitate to publish a guarantee of their present sphere.

I notice that the White House Jan 1987 statement on National Security Strategy is silent on this point; and I urge that we use the same prudence in our report -- and be careful to scan all of it from that perspective.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg